Whenever any incident of illegal mining comes to the notice of the colliery authorities within the leasehold areas, patrolling by the CISF is intensified. At times, such raids are conducted jointly by CISF and the local Police. After the illegally mined coal and implements of illegal mining and transportation of coal are seized during the course of raids, the same are handed over to the local police station by the coal companies and First Information Reports are lodged.

Jute Bags

*496. SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether mandatory requirement of packing cement in jute bags has been scaled down from existing 50 per cent of the total output to 40 percent for 1997-98 and 30 percent in 1998-99;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to save the interests of thousands of jute growers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to save the interests of the jute growers inter-alia include issue of Jute Packaging Orders from time to time under the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987, fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute and entry into market of the Jute Corporation of India, whenever needed.

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

*497. SHRI ANANT GUDHE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether under new package of Cooperation with UNIDO the Government have proposed to set up an International Centre for advancement of manufacturing technology with a view to bridging the gap between R & D and commercialisation through international partnership;

(b) if so the details thereof alongwith important features;

(c) the tentative locations under consideration for setting up the centre and present status of the proposal; and

(d) the total cost of the project and financing pattern proposed?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) There is a proposal to establish International Centre for Advancement of Manufacturing Technology (ICAMT) in cooperation with UNIDO. The ICAMT is proposed to be located in Bangalore.

The Mission of ICAMT will be to act as gatekeeper for developing countries in the field of Advanced Manufacturing Technology. By tracking the latest world wide developments in leading edge technologies (Hardware) and the latest management/organisational practices (Software); the gap will be bridged between research and development organisations, and market demand within developing countries.

The activities of ICAMT will include courses, workshops, conferences, serving as focal point on a global network of affiliated centres, the completion of the pilot projects, advisory services, information collection and dissemination and preparation and maintenance of an international rosters of experts.

Currently, UNIDO is undertaking a feasibility study for this project. This feasibility study will assess developing countries' support for the Centre, its potential impact, financial requirements, long-term sustainability and possible funding pattern. The feasibility study report being prepared by UNIDO will bring out the total cost of the project and financing pattern.

Eliminating Import Tariff on Non-Technology Products under WTO

498. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI:

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has joined the non-technology agreement/Information Technology agreement of World Trade Organisation aimed at eliminating import tariff on wide range of non-technology products/information products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time fixed for eliminating tariff on all products;

(d) the main products covered under the above agreement;

(e) the details of countries who have joined WTO and to what extent the above agreements are likely to help India in the development of latest technology in the field of information technology; and

(f) the likely impact of the said agreements on the domestic industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir, India has joined The Information Technology Agreement (ITA) visualised in the "Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products" adopted at Singapore in December 1996 on the occasion of the first Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation.